GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2240
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2007
SRI LANKAN REFUGEES IN INDIA
Fanthome Shri Francis

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an alarming increase of refugees entering the country from Sri Lanka during the last six months;

(b) if so, the number of refugees who have arrived at Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu;

(c) whether Indian Government proposes to take up this matter with the Sri Lankan Government to ensure there is no further increase in refugees migrating India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) & (b) There have been renewed hostilities between the Sri Lankan armed forces and the LTTE since the beginning of 2006, which have resulted in an increase in Sri Lankan Tamil refugees entering India. From January 12, 2006 till February 28, 2007, a total of 17,924 Sri Lankan Tamil refugees have arrived in India.

(c) & (d) While conveying our concern on this issue to the Government of Sri Lanka, we have stressed the need for a negotiated political settlement of the ethnic problem acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka and for conditions for the safe and voluntary return of refugees to their homes.